

TOWN OF ARLINGTON



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Leslie Mayer
Donald Vitters
Elena Bartholomew
Crissy Tarantino, Associate
Peter Hedlund, Associate

Recreation Department

Park and Recreation Commission May 24, 2016 Draft Meeting Minutes

The Park and Recreation Commission came to order at 7:00pm for its meeting in the Senior Center at 27 Maple St. on Tuesday, May 24, 2016.

Commission Members in attendance included: Jen Rothenberg, Shirley Canniff, Leslie Mayer, Don Vitters, Elena Bartholomew and Associate Members Chrissy Tarantino and Peter Hedlund. Director of Recreation Joseph Connelly was also present.

Members from the public: Rob Usula from NB5 and Lee Rich (architect), Darcy Devney, Kevin Duffy, Adria Arch, and Robert Wheeler

Approval of Minutes – The Commission reviewed the minutes of April 12, 2016. Ms. Mayer motioned to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Ms. Bartholomew and approved 4-0 with Ms. Canniff abstaining.

Open Forum – Ms. Devney, a Magnolia Park area resident, spoke regarding the Magnolia Park project. Ms. Devney stated her approval of the playground and flooding management ideas. She asked the Commission to reconsider the reconstruction of the basketball court stating that she felt the basketball court was used infrequently and only 40 feet from her property fence. She asked that the Commission consider either using the court area as a green space or rotating the court 180 degrees. Additionally she requested that more trees be planted as a barrier.

Arlington Public Schools Use of Pheasant Avenue Park Update and Revised Request – Mr. Usula and Mr. Rich reviewed the latest plans for the modular layout during the Stratton School remodel and how it will affect Pheasant Avenue Park. Modular locations have been amended to address parking concerns and loss of play space. Modulares will be “flipped” closer to Mountain Ave, resulting in the loss of the teachers’ parking lot. A temporary lot will only fit in the adjacent field, abutting a Stratton School neighbor’s property.

Mr. Vitters questioned the impact the temporary foundations would have on the pavement. Mr. Rich stated that repairs following the removal of the modules were included in the contract. Ms. Rothenberg asked about the potential damage to the staging area for the modules and whether repairs were also included in the contract. Mr. Rich stated that the staging area would not likely sustain any damage, but it would be evaluated and repaired if needed. Mr. Connelly stated that a formal agreement would be put in place to insure the field and paved staging area would be repaired - grading, sod, irrigation, fencing and repairs of any concrete damage.

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Ms. Mayer asked if the abutters had been presented with the new plan or given the opportunity to present their input, being that the changes are significant. Mr. Rich stated that they had not, but told the Commission that they would present the information in the form of flyers.

The Commission discussed wording for the addendum of proposed use and subsequent repairs of Pheasant Avenue Park based on the new plan changes. Mr. Connelly will write the new formal agreement, as discussed. Ms. Canniff motioned to approve the proposed use of Pheasant Avenue Park, seconded by Mr. Vitters and approved 4-0 with Ms. Mayer abstaining due to concerns about the lack of a public process.

AYBSA Buck Field Discussion, Fencing Options – An AYBSA representative was not present.

Arlington Public Art Request – Spy Pond Park Swan – Ms. Arch stated that an abutters meeting was held and letters of support were submitted in hopes to keep the Swan Statue permanently. Mr. Duffy, the artist, stated that he was donating the statue to the town for permanent installation. A motion to approve the acceptance of “Penny” the swan as a donation to the town and permanent installation in its current location at Spy Pond Park was made by Ms. Mayer, seconded by Ms. Bartholomew and approved 5-0.

Special Requests –

The request of Amy West regarding the use of Spy Pond Park will be addressed at the next Commission meeting on June 14, 2016.

The Commission discussed the request of Diana Arezzo to host a Family Folk Dance sponsored by Folk Arts Center of New England at Robbins Farm Park on July 31, 2016. Ms. Rothenberg stated that she would like an amendment to the request stating that all signage regarding the event must be removed the day after the event. A motion to approve the request, with amendment, was made by Ms. Bartholomew, seconded by Ms. Canniff and approved 5-0.

Recreation Topics –

Programming - Mr. Connelly stated that registration numbers are up and the new summer ice hockey program is full.

Capital Improvements –ADA improvements are on hold until the capital project moves forward. Handicap parking and curb cuts will be discussed further by TAC. In regards to Magnolia Park, abutters that attended public meetings regarding the project felt the new, relocated basketball court would result in more use. The Commission will further discuss the potential for more trees and rotating the court 180 degrees, which will not affect the cost. The Commission discussed the existing Redwood trees and agreed the largest must be removed because it interferes with a large portion of the Community Garden. Mr. Hedlund stated that it is possible to keep the two smaller Redwoods, and the pathway between them, however some damage to the trees is possible from the new path and root system growth could affect the path in the future. A motion to approve plans to a.) keep the two smaller existing Redwoods, upon evaluation of an arborist b.) to rotate the basketball court 180 degrees and c.) to include buffer plantings on the south

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side of the basketball court abutting Thorndike Street was made by Ms. Mayer, seconded by Ms. Canniff and approved 5-0.

CPA funding was approved through a Town Meeting vote for the Robbins Farm Park project and will be available July 1, 2016. Project is slated to begin in September following the hiring of a landscape architect in August.

Mr. Connelly stated that 30' golf netting secured to 40-50' wooden posts was the best option to prevent injuries at Buck Field. The cost of \$30,000-35,000 is being quoted by one company, two more quotes will be requested. Ms. Canniff motioned to approve the plan to install four posts and the netting system as presented, seconded by Mr. Vitters and approved 5-0.

Off Leash Park and Program – Sue Doctrow would like a meeting to discuss off-leash results from the Vision 2020 survey thus far. It will be scheduled for June 14, 2016.

Other – Mr. Connelly invited Mr. Wheeler, a Buzzell Field abutter, to speak about his concerns regarding noise levels and loitering following men's softball games. Mr. Wheeler stated that since May 9, 2013 there have been "dozens of issues" with a particular team who drink during their games and then drive, litter the area with beer cans, loiter and make excessive noise past the 15 minutes they are permitted to be on the field for games that end past 9pm. Mr. Connelly stated that the teams have been warned and as a result there has only been one complaint in 2016. Ms. Mayer asked if reevaluating the permit and reducing the 10:00 field closing time to 9:00, based on the change in game schedules, would help with the noise complaints. Ms. Mayer and Ms. Rothenberg stated that drinking on the field is illegal and should be reported to the police. Mr. Wheeler stated that he has been in contact with Captain Jim Curran who has implemented patrols in the area during game times. Mr. Connelly stated that the Commission would issue a memo to the softball league stating that there is no drinking permitted on the field. Ms. Bartholomew motioned to adjourn at 9:40pm, seconded by Ms. Canniff and approved 5-0.

Submitted by: Deanna Healy